

# VANCOUVER RECITAL SOCIETY

## MEDIA RELEASE

**Vancouver Recital Society presents cellist Steven Isserlis with pianist Dénes Várjon. Programme of four sonatas celebrates the anniversaries of Schumann, Barber, Chopin and Dohnányi.**

For Immediate Release – March 8, 2010



**(Vancouver, BC)** – Vancouver Recital Society (VRS) presents internationally renowned British cellist **Steven Isserlis** with Hungarian pianist **Dénes Várjon** at the **Chan Centre for the Performing Arts** on **Sunday, March 21, 2010 at 3.00pm**. A pre-concert talk will commence at 2.15pm. The programme consists of four sonatas and was devised by Isserlis to celebrate the bicentenaries of Schumann and Chopin (both born in 1810), the centenary of Barber (born in 1910) and the fiftieth anniversary of Dohnányi (died in 1960). Isserlis is performing his own arrangement of Schumann's *Sonata for Violin and Piano in A minor*.

A firm favourite with Vancouver Recital Society audiences, Isserlis is acclaimed worldwide for his technique and musicianship, and enjoys a distinguished career as a soloist, chamber musician and teacher. Gramophone Magazine declared, "*The music world – and music itself – is infinitely richer for the presence of Steven Isserlis.*" He is a keen exponent of contemporary music and has worked with many composers on new commissions since giving the world premiere of John Tavener's *Protecting Veil* at the BBC Proms in 1989 (a piece which he performed shortly afterwards at the Vancouver Chamber Music Festival). At the 2009 Aldeburgh Festival he premiered Thomas Adès' new work for cello and piano, *Lieux Retrouvés*, together with the composer.

Writing and playing for children is another major interest for Isserlis. His first book, a children's history of the lives of six great composers, *Why Beethoven Threw the Stew*, was published by Faber and Faber in 2001 to great acclaim, and a sequel, *Why Handel Waggled his Wig*, was published in 2006. Both books have been translated into many languages. The recipient of many honours, Steven Isserlis was awarded a CBE in 1998 in recognition of his services to music, and in 2000 he received the Schumann Prize of the City of Zwickau.

Dénes Várjon was born in Budapest in 1968 and studied there under Sandor Falvai, György Kurtág and Ferenc Rados at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music. He was a first prize winner at the Hungarian Radio Piano Competition, the Leo Weiner Chamber Music Competition in Budapest and the Concours Géza Anda in Zürich. He is a regular guest at the most prestigious international festivals including Salzburger Festspiele, Lucerne Festival, Schleswig-Holstein Musik-Festival, Biennale di Venezia, Marlboro Festival, Klavierfestival Ruhr, Kunstfest Weimar, and Edinburgh Festival. He is invited to András Schiff's Ittlinger Konzerttage in Switzerland almost every year and enjoys a longstanding relationship with Open Chamber Music at Prussia Cove.

Tickets available at [www.ticketmaster.ca](http://www.ticketmaster.ca)

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